

What Blesses God, Part 4 - Romans 15:10-13 – August 18th, 2013

- Today's teaching will be part four of a series I've titled; "What Blesses God."
- If you don't mind, I'd like to very quickly review the ways we can bless God that we've already looked at from verse one through verse nine.

1. Bearing with others (Verses 1-3)

- Paul says we who are strong should bear with the failings of the weak to build them up, then quoting Psalm 69:9 he uses Christ's example.

2. Unifying among others (Verses 4-6)

- Paul prays that the God who gives endurance and encouragement would also give us a spirit of unity among ourselves as we follow Jesus.

3. Accepting of others (Verses 7-9)

- Here Paul exhorts us to be accepting one of another, just as Jesus Christ accepted us, because in so doing, we in turn bring praise to God.

4. Peace with others (Verses 10-13)

- v10-11 Paul quotes Deuteronomy saying to rejoice, O Gentiles, and praise the Lord and sing praises to Him all you people along with Israel.
- v12 Paul Quotes Isaiah saying the Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations, so the Gentiles will hope in Him.
- v13 He says, may the God of hope fill you with joy and peace as you trust in Him, so you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

- It's interesting to note that Paul would quote the Psalms in verse nine, Deuteronomy in verse ten, and then quote Isaiah in verse twelve.
- This begs the question of why he quotes these specific passages. One suggests it's that it represents the Psalms the law and the prophets.
- In other words, Paul is making it very clear, in no uncertain terms, Jesus Christ came to bring peace and hope to both Jews and Gentiles.

Charles Spurgeon - "Jesus our Lord became the servant of the Jews, and preached among them in fulfillment of prophecy; shall we not become the servants of others for their good? Nor did His ministry end with Israel; but we, who are Gentiles, share the blessing; therefore, like our Lord, we should seek the good of all mankind and live to bless them."

- The only way this peace with others can be realized amongst bitter enemies as the Jews and Gentiles is by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- This is why Paul is ever so careful to write at the end of verse thirteen that this peace overflows with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Absent the power of the Holy Spirit, we have no hope of ever blessing God by our efforts to live in peace with all men so we can be holy.

Hebrews 12:14-15 NIV Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. (15) See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

- Notice that the writer of Hebrews describes the enemy of this peace as a root of bitterness, which comes by way of missing God's grace.
- The reason I point this out is because if we harbor bitterness and resentment in our hearts toward others, we will cause trouble with others.
- So much so, that many will be defiled by that bitter seed that was allowed to germinate and sprout in our hearts thus producing a bitter fruit.

- Be that as it may, I suppose you could say, living in peace with others is "what" blesses God, and the power of the Holy Spirit is the "how."
- So, if we have the "what," and the "how," we now need the "why." Perhaps better asked, "why should I want to live in peace with others?"
- Simply put, the reason why I should want to live in peace with others is because of Christ, and the finished work on the cross of Christ.

- Here's how I get there, the finished work of Jesus Christ brought about my having peace with God, instead of being a bitter enemy of God.
- When I look to the cross, like the Israelites did, when the serpents were killing them with the bitter poison of their venom, I will be healed.
- When I look to the cross, the bitterness of that which has been done to me is turned to the sweetness of that which Christ has done for me.

Exodus 15:22-25 NIV Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. (23) When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) (24) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?" (25) Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made a decree and a law for them, and there he tested them.

- We're told that three days after a jubilant worship of the Lord, they went to the Wilderness of Shur but they sure don't have water to drink.
- They then arrive in Marah, which means "bitter," and found water, but it was bitter and they couldn't drink it so they now become bitter.
- The Israelites are really having some serious troubles related to water; first at the Red Sea, and now while at the Wilderness of Shur.

Charles Spurgeon - "Their first trouble was too much water, the second is too little; our trials are of all kinds."

- These same people who lifted their voices in praise to God are now, after only three days, lifting their voices and complaining to Moses.
- It's what we see next that I want us to see. When Moses is shown a tree to cast into the bitter water, it would be turned into sweet water.
- Perhaps you'll indulge me in closing as point out the typology and how it points to Christ's finished work on the cross turning bitter to sweet.

The tree	The cross
The bitter water	The bitter bondage of sin
The tree put in the water	Jesus put on the cross
The water turns sweet	The sweetness of salvation
Three days in the wilderness	Three days until the resurrection
Would have perished without water	We will perish without Christ
Able to quench their immediate thirst	Drink from Jesus and I will never thirst

Charles Spurgeon - "God has provided remedies for all ills, sweetening trees for bitter waters, and the cross to sweeten all."